



GLOSSARY OF ASSOCIATED CORNISH WORDS

Some Cornish language and dialect words relating to the countryside and hedges, their function & wildlife. Written Cornish is derived from many old documents with a variety of spellings, not all being shown. Dialect words derived from English are shown *Eng.*

Main source:

Gerlyver Noweth

Kernewek-Sawsnek Ha

Sawsnek-Kernewek (A New Cornish Dictionary) by R. Morton Nance pub. Dyllansow Truran 1990.

A

agroas = rose-hips

aiglet = haw-berry

anaf = slow worm

aras = to plough (*aras en kensa an todn* = to plough first the ley)

ascallan = thistle

azan = barrel-stave, rib

adgy = a gap, esp. a gap in a hedge

atal = mine rubbish, refuse or waste.

avallom = apple tree

awhesyth = skylark

B

bagas eithin = furze bush

barr = bolt, bar

bagaroot = turnip *Eng.*

bah = gate hinge

bal = a mine

banal = broom plants

baren = small branch

bares = buzzard

barles, barlez = barley

bedewen = birch tree

bethan = meadow

beorth = cattle enclosure

bownans = lifetime (yn

ow bewanas = as long as I live)

bigal = cowman

bilders = water

dropwort, hemlock

bledgan = a flower

blowth = blossom

bod an ethen = sparrow hawk

bool = an axe, hatchet

bowlan = cattle pound

bolt = a stone-built drain *Eng.*

bothen = corn marigold *Eng.*

bottoms = a narrow uncultivated valley floor (Cornish *straze*) *Eng.*

bounder = lane leading from the homestead to pasture *Eng.*

bran = a crow

breach = heathy ground on which the turf has been cut and burnt *Eng.*

breath = herd grazing common land

breilu = primrose(s)

brogh = a badger

brows, bruss = broken wood fuel, small fragments

britton = thrift, sea pink

budnan = meadow

beuh = cow

bulas = hemlock

bullum = fruit of the bullace tree *Eng.*

burn = a load, as much turf, furze, straw, hay &c as one can carry *Eng.*

buorth = land manured by enclosing animals on it at night

C

kalx = lime

cammik = rest-harrow

carneth = heap of rocks

casting up = replacing soil run or fallen off a hedge *Eng.*

cadgwith = thicket

chawk = jackdaw

chikkiar eithen = furze chat, stonechat

clos, cluit = hurdle, gap in hedge

clugyar = partridge

cluit = a wattled gate, gap in hedge

cockedge = a trimmed thorn hedge (also used for drying clothes) *Eng.*

coffen, coffin, cofan = tin quarry, open to grass.

cogegoes = green woodpecker

colmy = to bind

cumpas = level, straight

conen = rabbits

core, coor = eight hours work.

corlan = sheep pen

cos, coose = a wood

cothan = bedrock
 country = the ground itself,
 especially used of that about
 or near an excavation *Eng.*
 cank = dog rose
 clicket = gate fastener
 clidga = muddy area around
 gateway &c.
 colan = pigeon or dove
 collan = hazel tree
 cran = bracken, scrub (cf.
 reden)
 creeb, criban = roof ridge,
 top of hedge
 creen = readily split stone,
 brittle
 crellas = ancient ruined hut,
 excavation in a hedge
 roofed over for shelter
 cricken (cricks, crinnicks) =
 dry sticks for kindling
 croft = uncultivated
 enclosed land esp. for
 growing furze
 crokkan = a snare for rabbit
 and hare
 crobman = reaphook, sickle
 cronag du = toad
 cronag mellin = frog
 crow = hut, hovel, or sty
 cue = ox shoe
 cuntl, terry = to pick or
 pluck
 cunys, kinnis = fuel,
 firewood
 cutting and casting up =
 repairing turf hedge *Eng.*

D

da = fallow deer
 dar = oak tree (also glastan)
 dash (tash, tosh) = unbound
 faggot of furze
 dashel, dysel = sow thistle
 davas = sheep
 denewes = young ox or

heifer
 devith = uncultivated
 waste land
 dowrak = soggy
 deyl = leaves
 doer = earth, soil,
 ground
 doerhok = nightjar
 dowran = watering place
 durgy = otter
 dralyer = trailing stem
 of plant eg bramble
 (extended to follower,
 sweetheart)
 dreth = sand, gravel
 drevas = arable crop
 dreave = barren, empty
 (as a nut without a
 kernel)
 drez an vledhan = all the
 year round
 dreyn, drannack, yrynen
 = blackthorn bushes (cf.
 spern = hawthorn)
 dreynek = thorn thicket
 dreys = brambles
 drim = ridge
 drok-dewedha = to come
 to a bad end
 durn = side post of a
 door or gate.
 dygea = to unenclose,
 unfence

E

edil = plough handle
 egr diu = daisy
 ehal = draught animal
 eithen = furze, gorse
 elaw = elm trees
 enlidan, ledanen =
 plantain
 ent = to empty out, rain
 heavily. "Es enten
 down" *Eng.*
 ervinan = turnip

ethen = birds
 ewder = straightness

F

falh = scythe
 falky = ready for mowing
 fave = bean
 fow, vow = badger or fox
 hole
 felga = ready to split
 fellon = hawkweed
 fenton = natural spring
 ferdhyn-tyr = land-farthing
 (quarter of Cornish acre)
 fern = bracken especially
 after cutting and stacking
Eng.
 foar = drill, furrow
 vor = road
 fôs = a wall (cf. kee = a
 hedge)
 fradge = to mend a gap in a
 hedge
 freath = gap in, or a,
 wattled hedge.
 frith = quickthorn hedge

G

gadga = daisy
 gadja-vrawz = oxeye daisy
 gahen = henbane
 gar = a stem
 garth = small enclosure
 gaver = goat
 geler = coffin
 gew, kew = best field on the
 farm (prob. nearest and
 oldest field)
 girgirik = partridge
 gladdy = yellow hammer
 glastanen = holm oak (Ilex)
 gleth = chickweed
 glastan = oak tree (see also
 dar)
 glaswedhen = sapling
 glaw = rain

glawgy = shelter
 glaws (gloas, gloz) = dry
 cow dung used as fuel
 glit = hoar frost
 glosen = dried cow-dung
 fuel
 glowwyth = trees for
 charcoal
 gluth = dew
 godegh = lurking-place,
 cover for wildlife
 godror = small homestead
 gulran-gea = hedge-sparrow
 goon = undivided moorland
 part of a farm or parish.
 goon = flatish downland,
 unenclosed pasture, usually
 shared between farms
 gord (goad) = 9ft rod for
 cattle, used for measuring a
 "lace", 39 sq yards. ?perch
 of land *Eng.*
 gorra, foen = hay
 gothal = watery scrub,
 willow carr
 gothfys = honeysuckle,
 woodbine
 gouwan = moth
 goyf = the winter
 gre = a herd
 greet = dry earth.
 grelin = horse/cattle pond
 grend (grin, gren) = rabbit
 snare, a loop in a chain (?
 crokkan ?)
 gribble = a rooted cutting of
 a plant
 gridge = a small fragment of
 a stone *Eng.*
 griggan = grasshopper
 griglan = heathland, bushy
 heather.
 grip = ditch along the foot
 of a hedge *Eng.*
 growan = decomposed
 granite, often used as core

for hedges.
 grig = heather
 groundya = to lay
 foundations, grounders
 guarrak = cattle
 gucu = bluebell
 (Camborne/Redruth)
Eng.
 gual = enclosed field
 (usually arable),
 sometimes in multiple
 occupation by villagers.
 guennol = swallow
 guhien = wasp
 guranan = wren
 gurgy (urgo, gorge,
 gurgow, gurgoe &c) =
 ancient low hedge,
 usually pre-Medieval &
 broken-down; also
 ancient low hedges
 (usually both sides of an
 old lane)
 guern = swamp with
 alders
 guersyn = spindle
 guhyen = apple bee,
 wasp
 gurthyd = ox-goad
 guersyn = wind
 gwage = uninhabited,
 empty
 gwandra = to ramble,
 stroll, wander
 gwnath = wheat
 gweal = arable land
 guedhan = a tree
 guedhan-knufan =
 hazel-bush
 gwetnak = tree-grown
 place, full of trees
 gweel kea = to build a
 hedge
 gwelz = the grass
 gwenan = bee
 gweras = ground, soil,

earth, mould
 gwarnik = marshy, swampy
 gwernam = alder-trees
 gwythrose = honeysuckle
 gwradan = wren
 gwrythya = to take root
 gwiban = fly
 gwybesen = gnat, midge,
 mosquito
 guilkin = frog
 gweeth = wood, grove
 gwescas = covering,
 coating, layer

H

have = summer
 hager gowas = cloudburst
 hagglan, haggles = haws
 hained up = to shut off a
 field for hay, also ground
 preserved by tin bounds
Eng.
 hale = moor (as in mire)
 hare = honeysuckle
 haze = seed
 haza = to set seed
 havrak = land tilled for
 fallow
 heap = turnip
 heblyth = pliant, flexible
 helagon = willow, sallow
 hendra = original or winter
 homestead
 henvor = abandoned road
 heskan = sedge bog
 heth = stag
 hewas = summer dairy farm
 holm-scritch = missel thrush
Eng.
 hogan = haw
 hôh = sow (pig)

hoppes = hops

I

igotty = keeper for gate

fastener
ivre, eaver = darnel

K

kea = hedge bank (*in neb toll kea* = in some hole of a hedge)
keas = to hedge, fence, enclose
keggas = Alexanders, hemlock, or similar
keleren = pig-nut, earth-nut
kelleel = plough stick, coulter
kelly, killy = small wood
kelinan = holly tree
kenidgak = place for getting fuel
kennegan = marsh or bog
kentra = to spike, fix with one nail
kerdhynen = mountain ash, rowan
kerh = oats
kerth = property (as of right)
kees = hedged, closed
kekezna = Cornish heath
kezan = turf or peat cut for fuel
kevelak = woodcock
keverang = hundred of county
kew = enclosure, close, field
kewny = moss, lichen &c.
kevar = land ploughed jointly
kib a gap = to mend a hedge with thorns, and put tabs or turves to keep them down.
kibbed = fenced off with bushes, furze, &c.
kilvin = plough tail
killas = clayey slate
kinnis = fuel for fire esp. turf, furze & scrub. Not wood or coal

kyfor = hollow way

L

lace, les = landyard of 18 feet square ?perch
lastethes = filth, vermin, weeds &c.
launder, londer = gutter
leasing = picking stones
lehan = flag-stone
lem = to strip *Eng.*
leaz = breadth
lesdushak = betony
leskes = burnt
laister = yellow flag
lidn = pond
logas = mice
lobm = bare, naked
ludnu = cattle
lokles = mugwort
lowarth = garden
lowarn = fox
loog = undergrowth of weed, clover, &c. among corn
lidziw = ashes
linas = nettles
lene = stitch, strip of land, often part of field in multiple occupation
lis- = former admin. centre, manorial court
lubbass, lobmas = unproductive ground
luzu = vegetation, weeds
luzumoh = hogweed

M

madere = groundsel
maglen = a trap, gin
maggy-uler = the goat moth
maruran = raven
margh = a horse
maun, maud, gurry = large wicker basket *Eng.*

meader = field or harvest mouse

meat-earth = soil suitable for arable cropping *Eng.*
meaz = large open field
melwhen = snail, slug
melenek = goldfinch
meilhionan = clover
melyn = a mill
mean-lear = foundation stone, grounder
merrian = ants
mill = poppy
minfel = yarrow
mola = thrush
molgh dhu = blackbird
moorstone = granite rocks or boulders, "scattered over our hills". Now used of granite from any source *Eng.*
mot = tree-root *Eng.*
mow = what is mown, small rick
mungern = horse-collar

N

noswyth = in the night
nyth = bird's nest

O

odgon, ohan = oxen
onnen = ash tree
orgal = woundwort
out-of-core = out of regular working hours *Eng.*
owna = to make right, to mend
oye = egg

P

pagespaw = lizard
pal, ref = shovel
parah, tonak = herd or flock
park = enclosed field, sometimes pasture

pedripromter = knapweed
 (lit. priest's heads)
 pednan = small pieces of
 turf.
 pedrevan = newt
 pednan = tadpole
 peeth = dug well (cf. fenton)
 penedna = broken tops of
 furze
 pezzack = a rotten pichard,
 broken fish not for salting
 plansa = to plant
 plaow = pests
 pleau = parish
 podar = rotten, decayed
 popdock, bochgoch =
 foxglove
 porfel = pasture, grazing
 place
 poth = burnt, scorched
 pow = countryside
 pras, praze = meadow,
 pasture, small grazing
 prill = small solid eg sheep-
 dropping, stone chip.
 prill = small solid eg sheep-
 dropping, stone chip.
 predn = timber tree
 pry = clay-earth, cob
 preve = 'creepy-crawlie'
 pillas = naked oats (*Avena*
nuda)
 pigol = hoe, mattock, pick
 axe

Q

quithias = herdsman

R

radgel = ground covered
 with loose rocks, fox's earth
 ramsan, ransy = wild garlic
 recam = grassy side of a
 hedge
 redan = bracken
 reeze = for grain to shed out

of ear
 ros = heathland hill
 slope or spur (cf. goon)
 ruddock = robin
 ryp = beside

S

saw = backload,
 horseload
 sawan davas = sheep
 creep-hole in hedge
 saime = pilchard oil,
 train oil
 scavaligian = wild arum
 scanarnak = hare
 scaw-dower = figwort,
 kennel wort
 scaw, scawan = elder
 tree
 scaw-dhu = hemp
 agrimony
 scollok = refuse of a
 slate quarry
 scoran = bough
 screech = a short sudden
 blaze.
 sentry = glebe land
 set = a lease
 sharaliggo = lizard
 shiver = a bar of a gate
Eng.
 sichor = a dryness,
 drought
 seavy = strawberry
 skeddrak = broken or
 dilapidated
 skedge, sherrish = privet
 skeet = squall
 skew, skiff = driving
 mist or drizzle
 soch = ploughshare
 sorn = nook, cranny
 sour-sops = common
 sorrel *Eng.*
 sowle = arish, stubble
 spern = hawthorn

spernek = thorn copse
 spethas = brambles
 splat = a piece of ground
 stent = rubble left by tin
 streamers in their workings.
 stroil = couch-grass
 strother = pack-saddle
 shewollok = fieldfare (the
 sly one)
 sprowse = light hay crop
 from pasture
 summering = farmstock sent
 on to moors for whole
 summer *Eng.*
 sumper = downpour

T

taler = headland of
 ploughed field, or end of
 tillage
 tam = short furze
 tash = a pile of furze, briars
 &c. at one cutting &
 removal
 tavolo = dock
 teel = to cultivate and sow
 ground *Eng.*
 teke = shrew
 tevy = to grow
 tiching = setting up turves to
 dry, to prepare for fuel *Eng.*
 tigry = kestrel
 tink = chaffinch
 tinner, dishwasher = pied
 wagtail *Eng.*
 tommy-tailor = the crane-fly
Eng.
 toll-ke = ditch beside a
 hedge
 todn = arable grass
 ploughed in rotation (aras an
 kensa an todn = plow first
 the ley)
 towargh, toor = light turfy
 soil for burning
 towan = sand dune, or land

derived therefrom

trap = stile

tre, tref = farming hamlet,
mostly post-Roman & pre-
Norman

treveglos = village (lit.
churchtown)

trimtram = sheep trap or
cattle grid

trone = a furrow, lynchet

trodgan = starling

trulerch = footpath

tubban, tab, tob = a turf

tyak = farmer, manager,
householder

tikki-dui = butterfly

U

ula = owl

urts = *Eng.* wortleberry

V

vady = damp

visgay, visgie = a kind of
mattock/hammer for
hedging

vorver = way cleared
around crops to ease access,
bridle-path

voulz = hedging bill

W

wastrel = uncultivated land,
unused *Eng.*

want = mole *Eng.*

weeth = a field

weggas = bindweed

wheal = mine-work

whil = beetle

winnard = redwing ("As
whisht as a winnard") *Eng.*

Y

yar = hen

yeat = a gate

yorth = roe deer

Z

zart = hedgehog

zewl = skimming plough
for removing turf.

Some old Cornish sayings

Nyn ges gûn heb legas,
na kei heb scovern
There is no down
without an eye, nor
hedge without ears.

Cows nebas, cows da
Speak little, speak well.

Guel yw guetha vel
goosen
It is better to keep than
to beg

Neb na gare y gwyant
coll restouas
He that heeds not gain,
must expect loss.

Nrb ns gare y gy, an
gwra deveeder
He that regards not his
dog, will make him a
sheep-killer

Gura da, rag ta honan te
yn gura
Do good; for thyself
thou doest it.

Me an' pref guyr a
gousaf,

Kyns ys dybarth.

I will prove it true what I
say,
Before we separate.

En hav perkou gwâv
In summer remember
winter.

An laver kôth yn laver gûr.
What's said of old is said in
truth.

Elo why clavier Kernuack
Can you speak Cornish?